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instances, however, significant findings are casually dismissed and left unexplored.

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ERRAND TO THE WORLD: AMERICAN PROTESTANT THOUGHT AND FOREIGN MISSIONS. By William R. Hutchison. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1987. 227 pp. $24.95.

- Reviewed by Samuel H. Moffett -

Professor Hutchison of Harvard picks his way with lucidity, scholarship and literary flair through a prickly field. He sets out to describe how independent-minded American Protestants have defined mission from the days of Eliot in the 1640s to the three-cornered liberal-moderate-conservative debates of the 1980s, and in so doing has produced the best and most readable analysis of the subject in decades.

One of the virtues of Hutchison's methodology is his spare and focussed use of categories. Without minimizing the diversity of issues involved, he manages to frame them within the context of three hundred years of tension between two answers to the question, what is the fundamental purpose of the missionary? Is it to Christianize or to civilize? As he contrasts them, Christianization is the narrower evangelistic and conversionist answer; civilizing is the broader, humanizing, society-changing view. Within a flexible chronology of overlapping periods of American history, he finds significant variations in the dominance of one or the other of these controlling emphases.

Little tension was preceived between the two goals in the colonial period of American Indian missions. Catholics and Protestants alike soon concluded that however purely evangelistic their motives might be, in practice it was impossible to communicate the gospel to seemingly imperfect and impermeable tribal cultures without changing the cultures, combining "civility with Religion," as Eliot put it.

In the next period, roughly to the War of 1812, Hutchison describes how the intoxicating sense of a "new American nationalism" altered both the civilizing and evangelistic motifs in missions. Americans freely criticized the old European culture into which they had once sought to bring their converts, but were led in turn into a dangerous new assurance that westernism purified by the American revolution and the Christian religion could save the world. "Christian obligation and American obligation were [seen as] fundamentally harmonious," says Hutchison.

Beginning about 1810 the pendulum began to swing the other way. "Christ, not Culture" is the title of Hutchison's third chapter. One reason for the change was the failure of most missionary efforts to bring Indian culture into the American mainstream, a failure that weakened confidence in "civilizing" as an effective model of mission. Another was the startling initial evangelistic successes of the mission to Hawaii which seemed to be God's seal of approval on direct proclamation of the gospel. The greatest American mission statesman of the century, Rufus Anderson, advocated "gospel only" missions and produced a textbook plan for world mission: the planting of indigenous churches "self-governed, self-supported and self-propagating."

"On the whole," says Hutchison, "a subsequent era . . . repudiated Anderson," but the change same slowly. As the 19th century closed the motto of the Student Volunteers was still evangelism triumphant. "The Evangelization of the World in This Generation." But new leaders were emerging. Anderson's successor as the outstanding missions spokesman in the new century was Robert E. Speer. Enthusiastically supportive of Anderson's focus on evangelism and indigenization, he nevertheless refused to accept the separation of the evangelistic from the social and educational tasks of Christian mission, and though he opposed "untamed" western colonialism he could promote missions as the spiritual expansion of the Kingdom of God. Hutchison's title for chapter four aptly catches the missionary spirit of the age: "A Moral Equivalent for Imperialism."

The missionary movement passed what Hutchison rightly calls its "watershed" at the great World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910, and its statistical high-point on the eve of the great depression. An era of radical polarization followed in which once more the marks of separation revolved around the familiar issues of evangelizing and civilizing. On one side it produced a two-pronged assault on the activist, liberal civilizing concept of mission. Hutchison traces this attack to independent strains of European pietism and American fundamentalism, a label which he somewhat misleadingly applies to J. Gresham Machen. From the other side, came a devastating assault on traditional evangelism-centered mission by such diverse figures as Pearl Buck, William E. Hocking and Hutchison's own favorite, Daniel J. Fleming who championed softer evangelism, and mission by service and example.

By the end of the 1950s it seemed that victory had been won by neither side, but by a centrist coalition led by Robert E. Speer and the missionary boards of mainline denominational America. Statistically, however, as Hutchison points out, the victory was surprisingly short. Liberalism retreated and regrouped but did not grow within the church context. Mainline missionary personnel shrank, and as if in mirror-image reversal, the forces of evangelical missions, both conservative and fundamentalist, exploded around the world. The result, observes Hutchison, is an "Ecumenical-Evangelical standoff."

Perhaps "standoff" is the right word, but there is some movement stirring, and to this reviewer at least it seems to be that it is moving with the statistics and not in the direction that Hutchison's final chapter would suggest. He hopes for a future in missions that will blend "Christian effectuality within the new religious and cultural pluralism." Cultural pluralism, of course. But adding religious pluralism to the debate involves a shift of categories from culture as civilization to a profounder category, truth. If religious pluralism means something more than freedom of religion; and if the pluralism he hopes for is the equalizing of the truth claims of all the great religions, then that is not the basis of whatever encouraging signs there may be of an emerging ecumenical/evangelical consensus, a consensus that gladly finds truths in all religions but stands on the common affirmation that the source and center of truth is not "religion" but Christ.

Meanwhile, as the debate continues and consensus waits, there is no better book on the American history of that debate, and no fairer, livelier description of the controversies and the controversialists, than this first rate volume by one of this country's most respected historians of religion.

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BEYOND THE TEXT: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO LITURGY. By Lawrence A. Hoffman. Indiana University Press, 1987. 213 pp.

The heightened attention given to the social scientific analysis of culture in recent years has been accompanied by a lively discussion about appropriate perspectives and methods. This work is an elegantly written, well documented contribution to that discussion, a plea for scholars of religious liturgy to extend their analytical repertoires beyond traditional methods that are concerned solely with liturgy as texts. Taking aim at two prevailing methods of liturgical analysis — philology and form criticism — for their lack of concern with the worshiping community that produced the texts, the author, a professor of Jewish liturgy, urges a more holistic approach to liturgical studies, one which takes into account the people who create and use prayer: their sense of identity, their cognitive frameworks, and their ethos and worldview. The book is both a defense of such an enlargement of scope and a demonstration of ways in which various social scientific methods — the interpretive perspective of Clifford Geertz, the structural anthropology of Claude Levi-Strauss and Mary Douglas, the symbolic analysis of Victor Turner, the semiology of Roland Barthes — can be brought to bear on these issues, with examples drawn from the liturgy of Judaism.

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